AN ANALYSIS OF RADIO AUDIENCE PREFERENCES FOR DIFFERENT PROGRAM TYPES IN GUTHRIE, OKLAHOMA

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PREFACE

With valid research information, the management of a radio station can make programming decisions that should meet the needs and interests of the community that radio station serves. Valid research information is not always available to the small-market radio station manager. When that is the case, he must develop his own research to better understand and serve his community.

I am grateful to many people who have contributed to this study: Ralph Robinson, owner of KOKC; Peggy Royster, head librarian at the Guthrie Public Library; Dr. William Rugg for his support and advisement as my thesis advisor; Dr. Phillip E. "Ed" Paulin, my link between undergraduate and graduate school; Dr. Maureen Nemecek, for graciously serving on my committee on late notice; and to the late Dr. Walter Ward, for invaluable training in research, communications theory and humanity.

To my wife, Becky, and my son, Daniel, I dedicate this thesis for their love and patience during my two years of graduate study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The advent of the first radio stations during the 1920's created demand to find out how many people were actually listening to each station. Such information would be used to assist the radio station staff in selling commercials and program time, their only source of revenue. As the number of radio stations grew (612 stations on air by July 1, 1930)[1], the need for more research information to measure the stations' audiences grew. The creation of companies and organizations to conduct such measuring was inevitable.

There appears to be some disagreement as to the first broadcast research organization. Chester credits the Crossley Reports in the early 30's as the first.[2] The Crossley Reports, however, were advertiser-sponsored. The Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting (CAB) was started in March of 1930 as a broadcast industry research organization.[3] Broadcasters were excluded from receiving the reports during the early years. Quall and Brown credit Hooper with being the first broadcast research organization;

> The beginning of commercial research in broadcasting dates from 1935. In that year, the C.E. Hooper Company began supplying ratings of network radio programs, using the telephone coincidental method. For years, the Hooper rating was a powerful factor in the determination

> of the success or failure of many network programs. In 1950, the national services of the C.E. Hooper Company were purchased by the A.C. Nielsen Company; but Hooper continues to provide audience measurement services for local radio stations. (4)

The Crossley ratings were based on telephone interviews --the numbers selected at random from directories--and the method of "telephone recall," where listeners were asked to recall what they had listened to for the past several hours. Hooper developed the "telephone coincidental" method, where persons called--again randomly selected from phone directories --were asked what they were listening to at the time of the call.[5]

The Pulse, Inc., system, founded in 1941, provided competition for Hooper. The key to the Pulse system was its original methodology; home interviews--an in person visit with all members of the household available.[6]

During the mid-1960's another rating firm began to share the spotlight: the American Research Bureau (later Arbitron). The American Research Bureau (ARB) was founded in 1949, but was overshadowed by Hooper and Pulse for 15 years. The ARB discovered a method that considerably reduced the cost of surveys: it provided listeners with diaries to fill out and mail back.[7]

Over the years the number of broadcast research firms has grown. The 1985 Broadcasting Yearbook lists over 110 firms specializing in research services for broadcasters.[8]

Arbitron provides up to 31 different age/sex demographics, although it would not be necessary to have all

demographics in one survey, since several of them overlap.[9] Dayparts can be as broad as 24 hours or as condensed as 15 minutes. The radio ratings only show the average size of the audience for a time period or how many different people have listened during that period. They cannot rate the programs that are being presented during the selected time period. For the radio broadcaster's dilemma is to determine why a listener is tuned in. Is it the music, news, announcer, convenience of the signal or any number of other reasons?

In determining audience size these research company reports are adequate for most radio broadcasters. The information is used mainly for sales purposes in determining the price of advertising on their station and in justifying this price to their clients. Advertising agencies use the ratings to determine where to place their clients' advertising budgets.

Outside of the surveyed markets, a radio station manager does not have the ratings readily available to him. He can contract a survey on an individual basis, however, because he cannot rely on large amounts of national and regional advertising, or on other stations in the area to share the cost of such a survey, this becomes cost prohibitive. The ratings game, which is so important in the larger markets, is not available and thus tends to be unimportant in smaller communities.

Insofar as small-market radio stations are concerned, there is little indication that formal research techniques have been devised which help broadcasters translate the

ubiquitous experience of radio listening into meaningful responses to guide broadcasters in their operation.[10] The small-market operator must rely on factors other than formal research, which is not readily available, for economic success. In a study of 420 small-market radio station operators, 36 percent indicated that they conducted some type of research, ranging from phone calls and questionnaires to personal surveys.[11] In such a study it is not known whether stations sought the number of listeners or acceptance of certain program types. The validity of such surveys (especially questionnaires handed out to civic groups and personal surveys) is questionable due to the lack of randomness necessary for such a report to be valid. Additionally, most small-market radio station managers are not trained in research design and methodology or in proper statistical procedures. As a result, the information that is gathered in such fashion could most certainly be open to criticism and scrutiny.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research provided by major research firms supplies only the average size of each radio station's audience. This is commonly interpreted as an approval of the type of music which a station plays. In large markets the shares of stations with similar musical formats are combined to show what portion of the population listens to a particular kind of music. This kind of data (i.e., which station a listener is tuned to) does

not paint a totally effective picture of the station as a whole. Again, one cannot be certain whether the listeners are tuned to the particular station for its news programming, its music or for some other reason. Since stations with similar musical formats play the same music, it needs to be determined what makes station A more popular than station B. A standard research report, such as Arbitron, does not provide this information. Despite this lack of information, stations continually make changes in music, news personnel and other areas based on these ratings.

The small-market operator who does not even have the luxury of Arbitron-type information, must make his program decisions blindly which may or may not improve his audience and revenues. The small station operator may not necessarily give the community what it wants because the station management is not sure. Program decisions are based on such things as "comments on the street" or on the "gut feeling" of the station manager.

The problem then is twofold: 1) operators in many smaller communities generally do not have any valid form of audience research available to them, and 2) when it is available, research does not provide adequate information to make proper programming decisions.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on one community, Guthrie, Oklahoma, and its only radio station, KOKC-AM, a small-market radio

station in a community of just over 10,000. This station has been on the air since 1955 and has recently (within the last six months of this study) been sold to new management. Central to this study are the interests of this community concerning various types of radio programs. The program types are divided into three groups. One group is comprised of news programs. A second group consists of sports programs and the third group contains entertainment programs.

The individual programs chosen and the three program groups comprise the independent variables in this study. The dependent variable is the interest level of the local residents in each of the different types of programs. Other independent variables will be the demographics used in this study: sex and age.

This study seeks to determine the relationship (if any) between the residents and the radio programs offered to them. With the analysis of this data the management of KOKC can make decisions on programming which will better meet the needs of the community. With the results of this study, other stations in similar situations may also make adequate studies of their particular areas and the communities they serve.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This survey will be limited to the community of Guthrie, Oklahoma, and to programs relevant to the situation, those either on KOKC currently, those which have been on in the

recent past or those which are currently being considered by the station management. Other stations wishing to duplicate the study should use items which are significant to their own particular situation.

Residents were contacted by telephone. The only phone exchange in Guthrie exceeds the city limits in all directions. Because of this, some respondents may not actually live in the incorporated part of the city.

Because of the proximity of Guthrie to the Oklahoma City/Edmond area (approximately 15 miles away), some respondents may not perceive Guthrie as their home community or may not even be aware of KOKC. This should not, however, affect the respondents' interests in the type of programs used in this study.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Market

Stations are considered as small-, medium-, or large-market. Barnes defines small-market stations as those in a community of not more than 40,000 people with a maximum of two stations.[12] In addition, a small-market station should not be located in a community which is regularly measured by a research firm such as Arbitron.

Arbitron surveys over 260 markets a year. Of these the top 50 are considered large-markets. The remainder would be considered medium-markets.

Format

The type of programming offered by a radio station. Formats have been traditionally defined as either music based or information based (news, talk or news talk). Block programming, the scheduling of different types of programs throughout the day, remains popular with some stations. Recently there have been extreme variations in types of programming. Stations have dubbed some of these extremes as "Car Radio," the "Game Zone," "Weatheradio" and "Comedy Radio," to name a few.[13] While some musical formats can be adequately described as Country, Rock, Big Band and Beautiful Music, others such as Middle-of-the-Road or Contemporary are very vague. One study identified six different working definitions for Contemporary radio alone.[14]

Programs

These are the offerings of a radio station outside its musical offerings. Included, but not limited to this area, are newscasts, sports broadcasts, religious services, talk shows, games, agriculture programs, contests and other specialized programs.

Programming

The total offerings of a radio station including music and/or individual programs mentioned above. Stations that do not play music, such as all-news, would describe their programming as all-news.

ENDNOTES

[1]Broadcasting/Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985 (Washington, D.C., 1985), D-109.

[2]V. Jackson Smith, Programming for Radio and Television (Revised, Washington, D.C., 1983), p. 55.

[3]Mark James Banks, A History of Broadcast Rating Research in the United States, 1920-1980, with an Emphasis on the Rating Services, (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, Knoxville, 1981), p. 35.

[4]Ward L. Quall and James A. Brown, Broadcast Management (2nd Edition, New York, 1976), p. 137.

[5]Peter Fornatale and Joshua E. Mills, Radio in the Television Age (Woodstock, New York, 1980), pp. 61-62.

[6]Ibid., p. 62.

[7]Ibid., p. 64.

[8]Broadcasting/Cablecasting Yearbook, 1985, pp. 10-13.

[9]Michael B. Occhiogrosso and Martin R. Franklin, Arbitron Replication II, A Study of the Reliability of Radio Ratings, (Annapolis, Maryland, 1982), p. 27.

[10]John M. Couric, "Small Market Radio Community Involvement," Journal of Broadcasting, Spring, 1970, p. 177.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Rey LeRoy Barnes, Program Decision-Making in Small Market A.M. Radio Stations, (Thesis, University of Iowa, 1970), p. 16.

[13] Format Experimentation on the AM Band," Broadcasting, November 11, 1985, p. 50.

[14]James T. Lull, Lawrence M. Johnson and Carol E. Sweeney, "Audiences for Contemporary Radio Formats," Journal of Broadcasting, Fall 1978, p. 441. The five definitions were: beautiful music, middle-of-the-road, live progressive rock, automated rock and all-news.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Success in small market radio can only be accomplished through programming that reaches "as many people as possible."[1] Those were the words of Cary Simpson of WTRN-AM, Tyrone, Pennsylvania, at the 1986 National Association of Broadcasters national convention.

> In a large market, a five share of the audience is great. But in a small market, a five share isn't enough. If you don't reach enough people, you'll have trouble keeping advertisers.[2]

How does the small market radio station reach enough people and how does the management know how many listeners it has reached? Other speakers at the convention suggested that stations program heavy doses of contests, live remote broadcasts and sports programming.[3] John Lund, president of Lund Consultants to Broadcast Management, says the new direction of selling successful AM stations includes promotions, community involvement and marketing research.[4]

While these items are not all that can be done, they are representative of a local station interacting with the community.

Howard and Kievman have identified three basic objectives in radio programming.

> 1. To build a competitive format, or schedule, that will win the largest possible audience and/or a substantial loyal audience among a desirable demographic or special interest subset of the general population.
> 2. To satisfy public interest obligations.
> 3. To develop a favorable station image among the listeners of the intended target audience.[5]

From the time television supplanted radio as the primary source of home entertainment, radio audiences began altering their listening habits and began listening for a "sound" rather than for individual programs. Stations began tailoring their programming for certain segments of the audience. Music formats began to dominate.[6]

Howard and Kievman identified two basic modes of programming: block and formatting. In block-programmed stations, the schedule is divided into segments of time or "blocks," each of which is devoted to a different type of material. The alternative is the format approach, in which a consistent and continuous pattern of programming is followed throughout the broadcast day.[7]

Block programming, once very common, is most often practiced today by small town radio stations where competition is minimal and a need exists for several types of programming. Many large market stations have abandoned this approach because a new audience must be established for each block or program.[8]

Format stations can be classified into three broad categories; (1) music-based formats (stations that play one kind of music all day), (2) information formats (such as

all news or news/talk), and (3) specialty formats (such as religious, farm/agriculture].

Edd Routt identifies a third type of programming to go with block and formatting as total service. Routt says that a radio station in a single-station market must be "all things to all people." There should be music and information that specifically suits the needs, tastes and desires of the people living within the service area.[9]

Every station will have some kind of program nuance that makes it unique. However, stations do fall into basic patterns, with many being bumped under the same umbrella. The 1985 Broadcasting Yearbook lists 24 descriptions of major formats with an additional 29 descriptive names for these formats.[10] It becomes obvious that stations have a wide variety of formats to choose from.

Moomey and Skolnick suggest that stations are better off deciding who they want to reach. They identified five types of approaches to radio programming as follows:

> Type 1. Focused Adult. Type 1 audience programmers maintain a highly fixed image of their target audience. They focus upon upper income, professional adults whose social background mirrors what advertising agencies deem "desirable" from a marketing viewpoint. Programming found on these stations could range from the non-personality, non-offensive music formats to the sophisticated classical music format.
>
> Type 2: Focused Youth. Quite clearly, the programmers who fall into this category have aimed directly at a youth audience comprising sub-teens, teens, college students and young adults. It would appear that radio programmers using this focus are also highly selective in whom they wish to include in their audience. The listeners sought in this

> category might be seen as members of emerging groups, by virtue of age or social position. Some of them might very well be the sons and daughters of Type 1 adults.
>
> Type 3: Department Store. The Department Store approach represents a concern with program content categories rather than audience social characteristics. Programmers view their target audience through the kinds of programming they think will appeal to the most listeners. Target audience segments ranking high are information seekers, sports, news and talk-listeners, community-oriented individuals. Programmers here are concerned with presenting the image of a full department store loaded with the services they feel important.
>
> Type 4: General Adult. Programmers here seek more than the highly-focused Type 1 audience. They welcome a broad base of men and women from all social strata, and presumably tailor their programming accordingly. There will be wide differences of format in these types of stations; hence, the confusion usually surrounding the term "middle-of-the-road." Unlike the Type 3 programmer who thinks in program segments, these individuals will think in total station terms.
>
> Type 5: Young Adult. These are stations seeking their base audience among listeners in the 20-30 year-old age category. Programmers here often combine the continuing appeal of the Focused Youth format with the broadening tastes of young adults. This audience grew up with the Focused Youth format, yet each year that passes finds the upper age limit of this group moving forward. Many programmers are taking advantage of this ever-increasing group and seeing their base grow from year to year.[11]

Moomey and Skolnick write that by dealing with audience approaches, rather than traditional station format categories, specific programming techniques could be targeted to each audience type. This targeting approach becomes possible as rating services continue to be more explicit and detailed with audience demographics. And as stations have learned about whom they want to reach, they have become more

sophisticated in terms of whom they want to reach and how to accomplish their objectives.[12]

While the Moomey and Skolnick study was conducted in markets with populations in excess of 250,000 it can still be applied to the small-market operator. He also should first identify his audience before programming his station.

The decisions as to what will be broadcast, when it will be aired and in what manner it will be presented is usually made in the small-market operation by the station manager. Barnes found that of the 41 respondents to his study on small-market programming, 35, or 85.4 percent, identified the station manager as the key person for deciding what programs will go on the air. The manager also retained final veto power over any program proposed for broadcast.[13]

When it came to music format, again the manager generally made the decision. Others involved included the owner, program director and, in some instances, even the manager's wife is cited as having a say in musical selections played on the air.[14]

In an attempt to identify the target audience, Barnes asked: "What is the make-up of your audience?" However, the responses reflected not what the audience is, but rather the target audience for which the station is programmed.[15]

Since radio stations are so numerous (more than 10,000 in 1986)[16] the basic strategy is to devise formats and station images that differentiate each outlet from all others for the purpose of attracting steady, loyal listenership.

Each station must find its own niche, and that often means programming to narrow audiences.[17]

Programming to narrow audiences happens to be commonplace in large markets. However, in small markets broadcasters are faced with being all things to all people, or at least to a large segment of the population. Without some sort of guidelines, however, the station may miss the mark entirely. Too often broadcasters program what they think is best for the audience with little substantive support for those decisions. In John Couric's survey of small-market radio stations, 62 percent of stations responding reported they did not employ any type of research.[18]

Barnes' survey of small-market station managers indicated 52 percent had used survey techniques to measure their audience.[19]

While diary method and telephone use have been the predominant means of surveying listeners, small-market research uses some other, less-scientific methods. Stations have reported gathering research data from county fairs, civic groups and mailings to community leaders.[20] Others have used questionnaires, asked for comments over the air and have conducted their own phone surveys.[21]

There is some distrust of surveys among managers. Most managers seem to believe that surveys are only useful as selling tools and, in reality, are superficial and limited in scope.[22]

This distrust of research could stem from the lack of

significant findings due to inappropriate research methods. Also, without a clear goal in mind for the research, managers may be unable to interpret the findings they discover. It becomes necessary, therefore, for stations to indulge in research which is scientifically sound in technique for gathering data and to have clear-cut objectives for the research.

A recent professional study for KVSO-AM in Ardmore, Oklahoma, reflects these points. Residents were randomly polled on station and music preferences as well as news and sports coverage. A station with extensive news and sports coverage, KVSO was concerned whether listeners were tuning to them for these items.[23]

Professional organizations like the Radio Advertising Bureau and the National Association of Broadcasters can provide station managers with the information to do accurate research. An NAB publication, Why Do Research?, is designed for small-market radio stations choosing to conduct their own research. The book explains how to design a survey, how to choose respondents, conduct interviews and analyze the results.[24]

A & A Research of Kalispell, Montana, specializes in research for small-market radio stations with three different services. One service provides audience figures for a station, another provides data on all media within a station's area. The third service is custom-designed surveys for stations seeking information on audience preferences for

music, news, sports or whatever the station wants measured.[25] This is just one example of the types of services available to broadcasters who want accurate research data on their market or station. In addition, many universities provide accurate research services to broadcasters at a reasonable cost.

In Guthrie, Oklahoma, the local station, KOKC, has been involved directly and indirectly in several studies. In July, 1982, the station conducted a telephone coincidental survey asking 100 residents of the Guthrie area, "From which media do you get local news?" Fifty-three percent responded, KOKC.[26]

In November of 1982 the Oklahoma Newspaper Advertising Bureau conducted a survey for the Guthrie Daily Leader. Included were questions concerning radio listening. KOKC was listed as receiving 23 percent of the radio listening audience.[27]

The Fall, 1985 Arbitron for the Oklahoma City metro area did not mention KOKC. When a special Logan County breakout was produced, KOKC still did not appear in the report.[28] This further indicates the need for local surveys for small-market radio stations which are not covered in the national and regional surveys.

In August, 1986, KOKC again conducted a telephone survey asking respondents if they listen to KOKC on a regular basis. Thirty-eight percent responded that they listened to KOKC at some time during the day.[29] These

examples only serve to show how one station has been involved in research and what it can learn even when it is not in an area regularly surveyed by one of the recognized research firms.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Progrmaming a small-market radio station can be more complicated than a station in a larger market. It is not enough to just play music. The station must produce programs and programming that will continually attract listeners in its community.

Stations must decide what audience they want to reach and then how to reach them. For any specific audience there are a variety of formats and programs to choose from which all could be effective. Usually the station manager is the one who makes the program decisions at the small-market radio station.

Research can tell a station much about its audience. Small market stations that are not accurately measured by one of the nationally recognized research firms has several other ways to gather data. Sometimes these methods lack validity due to an absence of scientifc methods in gathering the data. When stations use scientific methods and have identified goals for the research, their results can be both valid and useful.

The review of literature has shown that accurate and reliable audience information about a small-market radio

station can only be obtained locally. A variety of methods are available, some more accurate than others. This study will conduct a local survey of the small-market radio station, KOKC-AM in Guthrie, Oklahoma, which is further described in Chapter III.

ENDNOTES

[1]"Reaching Out at Small Market Stations." Broadcasting, (April 21, 1986), pp. 71-72.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]"Examining What Programming Makes AM Stations Winners in Their Markets." Broadcasting, (Sept. 22, 1986), pp. 78-79.

[5]Herbert H. Howard and Michael S. Kievman, Radio and T.V. Programming. (New York, 1983), p. 234.

[6]Norman Marcus, Broadcast and Cable Management, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1986), p. 135.

[7]Howard and Kievman, p. 235.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Edd Routt, Dr. James B. McGrath and Fredric A. Weiss, The Radio Format Conundrum, (New York, 1978), p. 290.

[10]Broadcasting Yearbook, 1985, (Washington, D.C., 1985), pp. D/75-109.

[11]Robert Moomey and Roger Skolnick, "Typologies of Radio Station Audiences," Journal of Broadcasting, (Fall, 1970), pp. 469-470.

[12]Ibid., p. 466.

[13]Rey L. Barnes, Program Decision-Making in Small Market AM Radio Stations, (Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1970), p. 34.

[14]Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[15]Ibid., p. 80.

[16]Summary of Broadcasting, Broadcasting, (Sept. 15, 1986), p. 106.

[17]Howard and Kievman, p. 233.

[18]Couric, p. 177.

[19]Barnes, p. 84.

[20]Couric, p. 178.

[21]Barnes, p. 84.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Research conducted under the direction of the Bureau of Media Research, under the guidance of Dr. Walter Ward, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, Summer, 1984.

[24]Why Do Research? (Washington, D.C., 1980)

[25]Telephone Interview with Dr. E.B. Eiselein, A & A Research, Kalispell, Wyoming. October 13, 1986.

[26]Personal Interview with Gene Warfel, former Sales Manager of KOKC-AM, October 10, 1986.

[27]Personal Interview with Larry Adkisson, former Editor of the Guthrie Daily Leader, October 8, 1986.

[28]Arbitron Radio Market Survey, Oklahoma City Metro Area, Fall, 1985.

[29]Personal Interview with Connie Pierson, Office Manager of KOKC-AM, September 1986.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

One of the many goals of any commercial radio station, like any business, is to make money. Selling advertising is the only source of income for most stations. Selling advertising is dependent on delivering an appropriate audience that will respond to a given advertiser's message. It becomes necessary for a station's management to know what audience is listening to the station and what programs they like, what they don't like and what they would listen to, if offered.

This study, therefore, aimed at trying to determine what the residents of Guthrie, Oklahoma, are interested in hearing on the radio and who is listening to the local station, KOKC-AM. With this type of information, KOKC could add or delete programs which would make the station more appealing to the community and to potential advertisers.

Data Gathering Procedure

There are 5,041 residential telephone lines in the Guthrie, Oklahoma, area.[1] Guthrie utilizes just one exchange, with its area of coverage extending about five miles in all directions from the Guthrie city limits. Using the July, 1986

Guthrie telephone book, numbers were randomly selected to call for completion of the survey questionnaire. Starting with the ninth number (randomly selected) in each column of the book, every twelfth number was chosen for inclusion in the survey. No business listings were used.

There is evidence to suggest that telephone interviews are now the prime method of survey research. A study comparing telephone with personal interviews concluded that respondents are willing to provide detailed and reliable information over the telephone. The quality of data obtained by telephone may be comparable to those collected in personal interviews.[2]

The survey was conducted by members and friends of the Guthrie Library Board. The library, suffering from budget cutbacks by the Guthrie city government, was looking for alternative ways to raise money. The Library Board was paid one dollar for each completed survey. In addition, the City of Guthrie matched all money raised by the library in this venture. This enabled the library to receive two dollars for each completed survey. This fact also provided an incentive for those being called to participate in the survey. (Instructions for those conducting the survey are found in Appendix A.)

Some studies on mail surveys have found that offering incentives to subjects can increase response rate. Other studies have shown that paying subjects increases the response rate. The reason offered for this is that ". . . the responses

of the paid subjects were motivated by a sense of obligation to the task which was not equally present in nonpaid subjects."[3]

While subjects in this survey were not paid, (it was felt) they, too, would be motivated by a sense of obligation to help the local library.

Categories of Program Types

The survey was set up to gather data on four areas of radio listening by Guthrie residents. The first three areas dealt with respondents' interest in certain programs they might hear on the radio. The fourth area concerned respondents' personal listening habits. (See Appendix B.)

The first area was concerned with types of news programs. Respondents were asked to rate their interest in farm and agricultural news, business news, world and national news, Oklahoma state news and local news of Guthrie and Logan County.

The second area concerned sports. The programs in which respondents were asked to indicate their interests were: local high school sports, major league baseball and college sports broadcasts. In addition, respondents were asked about which sports and teams they would be interested in listening to.

The third area contained some entertainment programs including a local interview program, a radio swap shop program, games and contests and a listener participation

talk show.

Altogether there were 12 different types of programs which respondents were asked to rank based on their interest in hearing such programs on the radio (See Appendix B).

Method of Measurement

Respondents were asked to rate their interest in the various programs on a scale of 1 to 5. A 1 represented no interest; 2, slightly interested; 3, moderately interested; 4, somewhat interested and 5, very interested.

This Likert-type approach is a summated rating scale. Here the interest levels are considered of approximately equal value. The scores of the items are summed (or summed and averaged) to yield an individual's interest score using this type of scale.[4]

Kerlinger describes two characteristics of the summated rating scale. First, items are not scaled but the individuals responding to items are "scaled;" this "scaling" comes about through the sums (or averages) of the individual's responses. Second, summated rating scales allow for intensity of attitude suppression. Subjects can agree or they can agree strongly (or, as in this study, show no interest or be very interested).[5]

Variables and Analysis of Data

The independent variables for this study are the sex and age of the respondents. Either male or female, either

18-34, 35-54 or over 55. The dependent variables are the interest scores of the respondents to the three types of programs. The three program types (news, sports and entertainment) are also independent variables.

A factorial analysis of variance using three factors was used to analyze the data. Factorial analysis of variance is the statistical method that analyzes the independent and interactive effects of two or more variables on a dependent variable.[6]

A 6 x 3 crossbreak, as illustrated in Table I, was used to facilitate the study. A crossbreak is a numerical tabular presentation of data in which variables are cross-partitioned in order to study the relationship between them.[7]

TABLE I

ANALYSIS PARADIGM ILLUSTRATING
PARTITION OF VARIABLES

		TYPES OF PROGRAMS		
		News	Sports	Entertainment
Male	18 - 34			
	35 - 54			
	55+			
Female	18 - 34			
	35 - 54			
	55+			

From the interpretation of the crossbreak and factorial analysis of variance the author was able to determine:

1. Guthrie residents' preference for three different types of programs
2. The extent to which age or sex affected a person's interest in the three types of programs
3. How the three independent variables interacted with each other to determine the interest of residents in the program types.

Where interaction was present, it was necessary to run

post-hoc tests to determine whether the observed difference in the mean interest scores was significant, or possibly caused by error.

ENDNOTES

[1]Personal Interview with Rhonda Jackson, Manager, Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, Guthrie, Oklahoma. August, 1986.

[2]William K. Zikmund, Exploring Marketing Research, (Second Edition; New York, 1986), p. 204.

[3]Douglas R. Berdie and John F. Anderson, Questionnaires: Design and Use. (Metuchen, N.J., 1974), p. 63.

[4]Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, (Second Edition; New York, 1973), p. 496.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 245.

[7]Ibid., p. 159.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

What level of interest do the residents of Guthrie, Oklahoma, have in news, sports and entertainment programs on the radio?

In an attempt to survey this interest, a questionnaire was designed listing 12 types of programs which were either news, sports or entertainment. Each respondent indicated his interest on a 5-point scale raning from "no interest" to "very interested."

There were 158 respondents, selected by random, which were classified by age group: 18-34, 35-54 or over 55. The sex of each respondent also was recorded. This distribution by age and sex of respondents was very close to the actual distribution of these categories in Guthrie. Table II shows the actual number of respondents in each category and what percentage of the total respondents they represented, compared to the actual percentage distribution in the Guthrie area, based on U.S. Census data. Table III shows mean interest scores for each category--news, sports and entertainment by each group--Males 18-34, Males 35-54, Males over 55, Females 18-34, Females 35-54 and Females over 55.

These data were computed by assigning values to the

TABLE II

DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKOUT OF NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR PERCENTAGE COMPARED TO ACTUAL PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS IN GUTHRIE, OKLAHOMA

	Number	Percent	Actual Percent
Male 18 - 34	24	15.2	19.8
Male 35 - 54	17	10.8	9.9
Male 55 +	27	17.1	15.2
TOTAL MALE	68	43.0	44.9
Female 18 - 34	34	21.5	20.3
Female 35 - 54	13	8.2	11.1
Female 55 +	43	27.2	23.7
TOTAL FEMALE	90	57.0	55.1

possible statement responses, such as 5 for "very interested," 4 for "somewhat interested," 3 for "moderately interested," 2 for "slightly interested" and 1 for "not interested." A mean interest score was obtained for each of the three categories of programs by averaging a person's responses to each program in a category. Then, a mean for each group was determined.

The mean serves two important purposes. First, it is

a shorthand description of a mass of quantitative data obtained from a sample. It is more meaningful and economical to let one number stand for a group than to try to note and remember all the particular numbers. A mean, therefore, is descriptive of a sample obtained at a particular time in a particular way. Second, it also describes, indirectly but with accuracy, the population from which the sample was drawn.[1]

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF MEAN INTEREST SCORES FOR THREE PROGRAM CATEGORIES BY SIX DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

		News	Sports	Enter	Means
	18 -34	3.28	2.97	2.30	2.85
Male	35 - 54	3.47	2.96	2.41	2.95
	55 +	4.11	2.97	2.54	3.21
	18 - 34	3.69	2.68	2.72	3.03
Female	35 - 54	3.40	2.43	2.68	2.84
	55 +	3.61	2.53	2.75	2.97
Means		3.57	2.70	2.53	

For example, if the sample of males 18-34 is representative of all males 18-34 in the Guthrie area, then the average of their scores tells us much about the average of the population.

This chapter, then, is concerned with analysis and interpretation of the findings. A multi-factor variance analysis was applied to the 1,896 decisions made by respondents. That is, 158 residents of the Guthrie area indicated their degree of interest on the 12 types of programs they might hear on the radio.

Difference in Demographic Categories

Is there a significant difference in the mean interest scores of the six demographic categories of respondents?

The answer is no. An obtained F ratio of .98 indicates there is no significant interest in the observed mean interest scores of the six types. By reviewing Table III one can see the largest difference in mean interest scores is between males over 55 (3.21) and females 35-54 (2.84). Because these differences are not significant, it indicates they could have occurred by chance. If the study were duplicated it is possible the mean interest score of females 35-54 would be higher than that of males over 55.

Difference Between Sexes

Was the difference between the overall mean scores of males (2.97) and females (2.96) significant? Again, the

answer is no. The fact that the scores are so close together (a difference of .01), is usually indicative of no significant difference. The obtained f ratio of .006 indicates no significance at all.

Difference Between Ages

The mean interest scores of the three age categories are as follows:

18 - 34 (2.96)

35 - 54 (2.88)

55 + (3.04)

The obtained F ratio of .49 indicates these differences are not significant.

Interaction: Sex and Age

Even though the differences in the mean interest scores for sex and age are not significant, it is possible the two variables, working on each other, might cause a significant difference in the interest of the respondents. The differences are as follow:

	Male	Female
18 - 34	2.86	3.04
35 - 54	2.95	2.84
55 +	3.21	2.98

One can see that the greatest difference in the male and female scores is in the over 55 group. An obtained F ratio for this data of .91, however, indicates these

differences are not significant.

Differences in Types of Programs

Is there a difference in the mean interest scores of subjects for the three program types: news, sports and entertainment?

The answer is yes. An obtained F ratio of 25.71 indicates that the difference in the mean interest scores would be significant 99 times out of 100. At least one of the three program types is clearly favored by respondents.

The main interest scores of the three program types are as follows;

1. News (3.57)
2. Sports (2.70)
3. Entertainment (2.63)

A post-hoc t-test (or gap test) is used to determine the significance of the differences in these three scores. The obtained gap of .33 indicates there must be a difference of at least .33 between the mean interest scores of any two programs before that difference is significant. Table IV indicates these differences.

Clearly, respondents favored news programs over sports and entertainment programs. Respondents indicated no significant preference for either sports or entertainment programs.

TABLE IV

DIFFERENCES IN MEAN INTEREST SCORES
BETWEEN ALL POSSIBLE PAIRS
OF PROGRAM TYPES

Mean Interest Each Pair of Program Types					Mean Diff.	Sig.
News	3.57	vs.	Sports	2.70	.87	Yes
News	3.57	vs.	Entertainment	2.63	.94	Yes
Sports	2.70	vs.	Entertainment	2.67	.03	No
Critical Difference from Post-Hoc t-test = 0.33						

Interactive Tendencies

Is the preference in news programs over sports and entertainment due to the respondents' sex, age or a combination of the two? The answer to all three questions is no.

In examining the F ratio for these three interactions, only the F ratio for the interaction between program categories and sex (2.86) comes close to being significant. The observed difference in sports for men (2.97) and women (2.57) appears great, but is not significant. If the difference had been greater, it might have been enough to make the F ratio significant. While it has long been presumed that men prefer sports more than women, this study does not

support that assumption.

The F ratio for interaction between program types and age is .33, while the F ratio for interaction between program types, sex and age is .22.

Other Findings

Radio Station Listening

Respondents were asked two questions dealing with their personal radio listening. The two questions were: "Which radio station do you listen to most often?" and "What other radio stations do you listen to on a regular basis?" In addition, if respondents did not reply "KOKC" to either of these questions, they were asked, "Do you ever listen to the Guthrie station, KOKC?"

The local station, KOKC, was mentioned during these first two questions more than any other station. The top five stations in number of responses (along with this researcher's interpretation of their formats) are:

1.	KOKC	M-O-R	57
2.	WKY	Country	32
3.	KXXY	Country	31
4.	KKNG	Btfl. Music	20
5.	KATT	Rock	17

Of the 101 respondents who did not mention KOKC in the initial two questions, 54 responded "Yes" when asked if they ever listened to KOKC.

Responses, by age groups, are given in Table V. A total of 15 stations received at ;east three mentions and are shown in the table.

Reporting results of station listening, as done in Table V, can result in problems. Respondents were allowed to cite more than one station when asked what other stations they listened to regularly. Also, there is no way to determine to what degree the station "most listened" to is preferred over other stations.

The purpose of such questions is to get a feel for what is preferred in the market.

High School Sports

Respondents who said they were moderately, somewhat, or very interested (3, 4, or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5) in high school sports were asked, "Which high school sports would you be most interested in listening to on the radio?" Multiple responses gave totals higher than the number of respondents. The three high school sports in which respondents were most interested were:

1. Football (66 responses)
2. Basketball (26 responses)
3. Baseball (13 responses)

Major League Baseball

Again, respondents who replied with moderately, somewhat, or very interested were asked, "Which major league

TABLE V

TOTAL RESPONSES, BY AGE GROUPS, OF STATION LISTENING PATTERNS

	18 - 34		35 - 54		55+		
	M R	T	M R	T	M R	T	GT
KOKC	5-8	13	11-7	18	17-9	26	57
KOMA	0-3	3	3-2	5	3-3	6	14
KTOK	3-4	7	0-1	1	5-1	6	14
WKY	4-2	6	2-4	6	8-12	20	32
KRMG		-	1-1	2	0-1	1	3
KIMY	2-4	6	1-0	1		-	7
KMGL	0-6	6	4-1	5	1-0	1	12
KJYO	3-9	12	2-1	3		-	15
KLTE	5-2	7	2-1	3		-	10
KATT	12-5	17		-		-	17
KZBS	4-7	11	0-4	4		-	15
KKLR	2-2	4	0-2	2		-	6
KXXY	14-7	21	5-5	10		-	31
KEBC	1-7	8	2-1	3	2-2	4	15
KKNG	1-0	1	5-1	6	10-3	13	20

M = Station most listened to

R = Station listened to on a regular basis

T = Total for station

GT= Grand Total for station

baseball team or teams would you be most interested in hearing on the radio?" The teams receiving the most mention were:

Baseball Teams	Number of Responses
St. Louis Cardinals	7
Chicago Cubs	7
Texas Rangers	5
Kansas City Royals	5
Houston Astros	5
Atlanta Braves	5

There was no one choice for a favorite team by the respondents. KOKC has carried the St. Louis Cardinals game on the air in the past.

College Sports

Respondents who were moderately, somewhat, or very interested in college sports were asked two additional questions. They were: "Which college or colleges would you be most interested in listening to?" and "Which collegiate sports are you most interested in hearing?" Only two colleges received enough responses to warrant mention. They were the University of Oklahoma (64 responses) and Oklahoma State University (57).

The top sports preferred were:

Football (91 responses)
Baseball (16 responses)
Basketball (14 responses)

KOKC has carried both OU and OSU football in the past, but has not done so in the past two years.

Listener Participation Talk Show

Those who indicated they were moderately, somewhat, or very interested in a listener participation talk show were asked, "What time of day would you be most likely to participate in such a talk show?" Since results were both in time (such as 8-9 a.m.) and day part (early morning), the author defined six categories in which responses could be indicated. The categories and number of responses for each are as follows:

Early morning	6-9 a.m.	6 responses
Late morning	9-Noon	34
Early afternoon	12-2 p.m.	4
Late afternoon	2-5 p.m.	9
Evening	5-8 p.m.	16
Night	7-Midnight	5

This type of question could be used for scheduling if such a program were to be aired on the station.

SUMMARY

One hundred fifty-eight residents of the Guthrie, Oklahoma area took part in this survey. Respondents were polled by random selection and were asked to rate certain programs based on their interest in hearing them on the radio. News programs were preferred over sports and

and entertainment programs. No other conclusions could be drawn based on the data received.

The local station, KOKC, was listened to by more respondents than other stations, although several other stations received listening mentions.

On open-ended sports questions, listeners seemed to be most interested in high school football and Oklahoma University and Oklahoma State University football. No clear-cut favorite was established for a major league baseball team.

Listeners who showed interest in a listener participation talk show preferred late morning or evening for such a program.

ENDNOTES

[1]J.P. Guilford and Benjamin Fruchter, Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education (New York, 1973), pp. 42-43.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lack of valid survey information in smaller communities leaves many small-market radio station managers in the dark as to how they should program their stations. Even when surveys are taken they are not necessarily valid or the results are ignored. This study was designed to examine one community, Guthrie, Oklahoma, which is served by radio station KOKC. The concept behind this study was to determine if the interests of the community were being met by this station.

As the findings of Chapter IV revealed, respondents clearly favor news-type programs over sports and entertainment programs. No other conclusions could be drawn as to whether age and/or sex of the respondent were significant in having interest in a program type. Males appeared to favor sports programming more than women, but not at a significant level in this study.

The station does provide news coverage, but not as much as it has in the past. The elimination of a national news network and an agricultural network have reduced, but not eliminated, these services. Business and agricultural news is on a local basis only. Sports coverage has also been

reduced from the past couple of years. Only high school football remains on the station.

The station seems to suffer from its proximity to Oklahoma City when it comes to listeners. While KOKC received more mentions than any other station in the survey, the station splits the potential audience with many other stations. The youngest age group (18-34) favors FM stations, with five of the top six choices being FM stations. In the 35-54 age group, the top six stations include three AM and three FM stations. The Over 55 age group favors AM in four of their top five stations. KOKC, an AM radio station, must, therefore, also battle the trend in which the younger demographics seem to favor FM stations.

The purpose of a survey such as this one is to guide the station manager in making decisions. It does not, however, obligate him to use it. Both local conditions and outside conditions which vary consistently also must be taken into account. For instance, cost increases in telephone lines, which are necessary for many sports broadcasts, have made many such broadcasts cost prohibitive. Lack of qualified personnal to gather local news or to host interview programs sometimes makes these services either obsolete or substandard.

Even without the type of inquiries this study provides, many small-market radio station managers can profit just from knowing how many people are listening. In this study, thirty-six percent of the respondents revealed that KOKC was one

of the stations they listened to regularly or most often. An additional 34 percent said they listen to KOKC on occasion. These are figures that could be turned into advertising dollars.

As more small-market radio stations take advantage of the resources available to them in obtaining valid survey information, they can make better decisions when it comes to serving their communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was not an all-inclusive one when it comes to determining the interests of a community or the needs of the small-market radio station. There are several different approaches this study could have taken.

Respondents in this or any similar study could be polled as to what in particular they like about the station or stations they do listen to. This could reveal areas in which a local station is lacking or producing less than qualified programming.

Listeners who do listen to the local station could be polled concerning under what conditions they do listen. These reasons could run from "listen all the time" to "listen only when the weather is bad." This would assist station management in knowing what his audience will be under differing conditions.

Different program types or individual programs could be incorporated in similar studies. Remote broadcasts are

common in stations of all sizes. While not used in this study, it would be useful to know if listeners respond to such broadcasts and under what conditions.

Respondents could be polled on their interest in programs that have been removed from the air, or are bring considered for airing. This study included some programs which were removed and some which were being considered, but they were grouped into one of the three program types. If respondents favored programs removed from the air, then station management might be concerned with whether they totally understand the community they serve. A strong positive response to programs being considered could be a large factor in airing such programs.

While broadcasters in large communities receive their ratings reports based on audience figures alone, there remain many questions as to what factors were involved in receiving those ratings.

Broadcasters in small markets have an opportunity to determine the actual needs, interests and desires of their community. This study, while limited to just a few program categories, provides some insight into one community, Guthrie, Oklahoma. It is hoped that this study will benefit not only the local station, KOKC, in making program decisions, but also will prove useful to other small-market radio station managers looking to receive more insight into their communities so they might better serve them.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS TO SURVEYORS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GUTHRIE AREA RADIO SURVEY

Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling from the Guthrie Public Library. Due to city cutbacks, the library budget has been severely cut this year. To help raise additional funds, the library has agreed to conduct a survey for a student project at OSU. For each completed survey, the library will receive two dollars. Your phone number was chosen at random from the Guthrie phone book. All replies will be held in confidence and your name will not be used at all in reporting the results of the survey. Would you have about five minutes to complete a survey for us and help the library?

(If answer is no, ask if there is a better time to call back. If not, then terminate the call.)

The survey is interested only in persons over 18 years of age. Are you over 18?

(If not over 18, ask if there is someone at home who is 18 that you could speak with.)

The survey is on radio listening in the Guthrie area. We are trying to determine the interest of area residents in certain types of programs you might hear on the radio. I would like for you to rank on a scale of 1 to 5 your interest in the following types of programs; 1 represents no interest, 2--slightly interested, 3--moderately interested, 4--somewhat

interested and 5--very interested.

(Turn to next page to begin survey.)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

The first program is farm and agricultural news. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rank your interest in:

	1 no	2 slght	3 mod	4 smwht	5 very
1. Farm and agricultural news	___	___	___	___	___
2. Business news	___	___	___	___	___
3. World and national news	___	___	___	___	___
4. Oklahoma State news	___	___	___	___	___
5. Local news of Guthrie and Logan County	___	___	___	___	___

Thank you. The next few questions pertain to sports on the radio. Again, on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 representing no interest and 5 representing very interested, how would you rank your interest in:

6. Local high school sports	___	___	___	___	___

(If reply is 1 or 2, go to #8. If reply is 3, 4, or 5, ask:)

7. Which high school sports would you be most interested in listening to on the radio? _____

_____

How would you rank your interest in

8. Major League Baseball	___	___	___	___	___

(If reply is 1 or 2, go to #10. If reply is a 3, 4, or 5, ask:)

9. Which major league baseball team or teams would you be most interested in hearing on the radio? _____

_____

How would you rank your interest in:

	1 no	2 slght	3 mod	4 smwht	5 very
10. College Sports Broadcasts	___	___	___	___	___

(if reply is 1 or 2, proceed to *. If reply is 3, 4, or 5, then ask:)

11. Which college or colleges would you be most interested in listening to? _____

_____

12. Which collegiate sports are you most interested in hear hearing? _____

_____

* Thank you. Just a few more questions and we'll be finished. Again, on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 representing no interest, 2--slightly interested, 3--moderately interested, 4--somewhat interested and 5--very interested, how would you rank the following:

13. Local interview programs (with local politicians, business leaders, entertainers)	___	___	___	___	___
14. Trading Post/Swap Shop	___	___	___	___	___

	1 no	2 slght	3 mod	4 smwht	5 very
15. Games and Contests (such as radio bingo)	___	___	___	___	___
16. Listener participation talk show	___	___	___	___	___

(If reply is 1 or 2, go to *. If reply is a 3, 4, or 5, then ask:)

17. What time of day would you be most likely to participate in such a talk show? _____

* Thank you. I'd like to ask you a few questions concerning your personal radio listening habits.

18. Which radio station do you listen to most often? _____

19. What other radio stations do you listen to on a regular basis? _____

(If KOKC was mentioned in 18 or 19, go to #21. If KOKC has not been mentioned, then ask:)

20. Do you ever listen to the Guthrie station, KOKC?

_____ Yes

_____ No

21. Finally, for statistical purposes only, which of the following age brackets do you fall in?

_____ 18 - 34

_____ 35 - 54

_____ Over 55

22. (You will probably be able to determine this in advance.) What is your sex?

_____ Male

_____ Female

Those are all the questions I have. Thank you for spending a few minutes with me. All your answers will be held in confidence. By completing the survey, the Guthrie Public Library will receive two dollars for their current budget. Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX C

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE AND POST HOC T-TEST

TABLE VI

TYPE III ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE: PROGRAM TYPES, AGE AND SEX

Source	df	ss	ms	F	P
Total	311	617.51	----	----	
Between Subjects	157	281.01	1.79	.98	n.s.
Between Sexes	1	.01	.01	.00	n.s.
Between Ages	2	1.77	.89	.49	n.s.
Interaction: Sex - Age	2	3.29	1.65	.91	n.s.
Between Subjects Error	152	275.94	1.82	----	
Within Subjects	154	336.50	2.19	----	
Between Program Types	2	85.86	42.93	25.71	.01
Interaction: Program - Sex	2	9.55	4.78	2.86	n.s.
Interaction: Program - Age	4	2.24	.56	.33	n.s.
Interaction: Program - Sex - Age	4	1.48	.37	.22	n.s.
Within Subjects Error	142	237.37	1.67	----	

Post-Hoc T-Test
Critical Difference = $\frac{2 \times 2.19}{158}$ = .166 x 1.96 = .33

VITA

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